

— BRIAN TRACY —



THE 6-FIGURE SPEAKER

THE ULTIMATE BLUEPRINT TO BUILD A BUSINESS
AS A HIGHLY-PAID PROFESSIONAL SPEAKER

The 6-Figure Speaker

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THE NEXT STEP

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As a Keynote speaker and seminar leader, he addresses more than 250,000 people each year. He has studied, researched, written and spoken for 30 years in the fields of economics, history, business, philosophy and psychology. He is the top selling author of over 70 books that have been translated into dozens of languages.

He speaks to corporate and public audiences on the subjects of Personal and Professional Development, including the executives and staff of many of America's largest corporations. His exciting talks and seminars on Leadership, Selling, Self-Esteem, Goals, Strategy, Creativity and Success Psychology bring about immediate changes and long-term results.

FREE ACTION GUIDE & BONUS RESOURCES

This book is full of some of the best tips and strategies to get you on the road to becoming a 6-Figure Speaker.

I want you to succeed, and because of that, we have put together a free action guide to help get you to become the 6-Figure Speaker you desire to be.

To get instant access to the free downloads, please visit:

<http://www.briantracy.com/free-guide>

Introduction

Are you ready to become a professional speaker, easily build your influence, persuade, motivate, inspire, and capture the undying loyalty of your audience?

Do you want to invest in a skill that will not only open doors for you but will convince people that you are more talented and intelligent?

Then learning to speak well may be just what you need.

Your mind is your most valuable asset. One of your most precious skills is your ability to think well and to express your ideas clearly.

This skill will demonstrate your mastery of your subject. By expressing your thoughts and ideas clearly, you'll impress your audience and persuade them to your point of view. You'll capture their attention and open them to your influence.

Oh, and guess what? The act of planning, preparing, and delivering talks and presentations forces you to use your mind at a higher level. It actually makes you smarter.

Learning to become an outstanding speaker is the critical skill to get the success you desire.

More Money

Being an excellent speaker will not only get you the respect and esteem of others and attention from people who can help and open doors for you. No, being an excellent speaker will also dramatically increase your income.

More money means more options. It means more freedom, more security, and more time for the activities you love.

Learning to become a 6-Figure Speaker may be the decision you need to make to get the financial success you desire.

Throughout this book, you'll learn many of the ideas I've used to become an accomplished speaker, pulling in hundreds of thousands of dollars a year.

Eliminate Your Fear and Turbocharge Your Career

Becoming an excellent speaker will also do wonders for your self-esteem. By becoming a top 10 percent, you'll learn how to overcome your fear and take your career to the next level.

A few years ago, I gave a one-day seminar on executive effectiveness to some businesspeople, emphasizing the importance of being able to speak well and influence people.

At the end of the day, a shy businessman came up to me and told me that, as a result of my comments, he had decided to learn to become an excellent speaker. He had been ignored by his supervisors and passed over for promotions. He was frustrated and was willing to do whatever it took to reignite his career.

One year later, I received a letter from the same businessman. He had taken action on his resolution. He had joined a local chapter of Toastmasters, an organization dedicated to helping its members improve their speaking skills. He had also taken a fourteen-week Dale Carnegie speaking course.

Within six months, he had given so many presentations and talks that most of his fear and anxiety of speaking was gone. In its place was a growing

confidence in his ability to express himself to an audience. He was a new man.

Doors Open For You

It was at this time in his development that a small emergency occurred in his engineering firm. A partner had been scheduled to give a presentation to a client but was ill and unable to attend the meeting.

The businessman's boss asked him if he would prepare and present the company's proposal instead. He accepted the task.

Throughout the evening and the following morning, he prepared his presentation thoroughly. He went to the client's office, made an excellent presentation for the firm's services, and got the business. When he returned, his boss told him that the president of the prospective client had called and thanked him for sending someone to give such an excellent presentation of the firm's services.

Within a few weeks, he was being sent out regularly to call on the firm's prospects and clients. He was promoted and promoted again. Soon he was a member of senior management and on his way to becoming a partner.

He told me that his whole life had changed by making a decision to become a good speaker.

Becoming a good speaker will not only revolutionize your career. It might just change your life.

The Four Ds to Speaking Excellence

My goal in writing this book is to help simplify the process of becoming an excellent speaker for you. In my experience, to become an outstanding 6-Figure Speaker, you need to have the four Ds.

1. *Desire*. First, you must have an intense, burning *desire* to speak well. If your desire is strong enough and you want to become a 6-Figure Speaker long enough, nothing can stop you from reaching your goal. But desire is

not enough.

2. *Decision.* Like the businessman, you must make a *decision* this very day that you are going to make every effort, overcome any obstacle, and do whatever it takes to become a 6-Figure Speaker.
3. *Discipline.* You must have the *discipline* to plan, prepare, and deliver talks and presentations, over and over again, until you achieve success.
4. *Determination.* Finally, you must have the *determination* to persist and persevere in spite of any short-term setback, obstacle, or embarrassment you may experience.

The Only Limit Is You

In life, our greatest enemies are our own doubts and fears. Yet there are no limits to what you can do, be, or have except for the limits you place on yourself.

Over the years, I have delivered more than 5,000 presentations and spoken personally to more than 5,000,000 people in fifty-seven countries. In this book, I will take you by the hand and show you, step by step, how to develop the courage, confidence, and competence to be a winning speaker. I'll show you your own personal roadmap to becoming a 6-Figure Speaker.

Are you ready? Good, let's get going.

PART 1

Your Road Map

All Speakers in the top ten percent started out in the bottom ten percent. This section will provide you with the road map to go from nothing to a 6-Figure Speaker.

You'll learn the importance of your burning message, the story of how I got my first gig, and how to get future clients. You'll get a hint of the kind of change you can make in your life and the lives of others as a speaker.

CHAPTER

1

YOU SHOULD BE A PROFESSIONAL SPEAKER

“I want to be a professional speaker, too.”

One of the top speakers in America, a friend of mine, regularly heard this from people who claimed that they, too, wanted to be speakers.

He would then ask the question, “Why?”

Often they would tell him they wanted to be famous.

Or make a lot of money.

Or be a star on the stage.

He then had to point out that these were not good enough reasons. People often get into acting because they dream of being ten or twenty million dollar per movie actors, but 95% of actors are unemployed most of the time because those actors are incredibly rare.

Becoming a professional speaker can make you a lot of money and give you a well-known name, but that is not enough of a reason to want to do it. There has to be something else.

The reason why successful speakers are successful is because they have a burning message.

Your Burning Message

A writer is someone who cannot *not* write.

An actor is someone who cannot *not* act.

And a speaker is someone who cannot *not* speak.

Real speakers love their subject so much and believe it's so important that they are compelled to convey it to people. And they are willing to work very hard for a long time to improve their ability to transfer their enthusiasm and their knowledge about the subject to others.

There's a good chance you have a burning message within you right now.

You Have To Have a Message

What do you feel so strongly about that you *have* to share your ideas with others?

You can't just speak for the money or for the praise and recognition. People who do this give little to no thought to their audience. In my experience, these people rarely rise above mediocrity.

But if you have something from the heart that you strongly want to share, then you'll find a way to become effective in expressing yourself.

Speak from the Heart

A few years ago, I heard Wally Amos, the founder of Famous Amos Cookies give a talk on tackling adult illiteracy. This was an issue that Wally was dedicated to. He'd spent a great deal of his time and money in helping adults learn how to read.

Wally had no particular training as a speaker, yet when he spoke to the 600 adults in the audience, he spoke from his heart. He spoke about the importance of adults learning to read and how it could radically change their lives. Such was the passion and sincerity of Wally's talk that he got a standing ovation from the entire room.

Why was this?

Wally organized his ideas into a logical sequence, but more importantly, he spoke from his heart on a subject he understood and cared about.

Speak from the heart—it'll not only connect you with your audience but will allow your talk to be outstanding.

Summary

- Speakers are successful because they have a burning message, not because they want to make money.
- Just as a writer is someone who cannot *not* write, a speaker is someone who cannot *not* speak.
- Don't be scared to speak from the heart. It'll take you far.

CHAPTER

2

MY STORY – OVER 5,000 SPEECHES LATER

How do you get into speaking? After all, it's not a path familiar to most people.

The truth is, there is no right way to get into speaking. I'll illustrate this with my own story.

I started off as a laborer as you may know, and I eventually got into sales. I struggled in sales until I finally learned how to sell. People started asking how I was doing as well as I was, and my boss suggested that I recruit some people and teach them what I knew.

I began to recruit people and pretty soon had built a sales team, all of whom needed training. So I started to put together little sales training courses. I decided that a sales training course would have to have a logical opening, and then a development, a close, and a call for action. I really knew nothing about what I was doing, but the need was there.

It turns out that an enormous number of professional speakers start off the same way I did, by speaking in their organization or having been asked to talk on their subject to a small group of people within their industry.

Eventually, someone who sold seminars for a large seminar company but had just been laid off because of cutbacks approached me. This was the beginning of the 1980 recession when most of the professional training companies went bankrupt, and interest rates skyrocketed to thirteen and fifteen percent.

I had worked with the Chamber of Commerce and the Board of Trade, and he had seen me speak at some of the meetings where I'd done a couple of business talks. So this guy asked if I could put together a seminar. I told him I could put together a seminar on personal development. His name was Denis, and he said that if I could put a seminar together, he could sell it.

So I sat down and began to design a seminar, using my experience of attending them. I did a bit of research and found that three days was too long and that a two-day weekend event was a popular model. That first seminar was two days long. I spent 300 hours pulling together ideas and concepts on planning and goal setting and things I'd read and learned from books, seminars, and courses. I organized it into a full two-day seminar.

I brought in fifteen of my friends to a boardroom and gave that seminar to them as a beta test so that they could listen and critique it. At the end, they told me it was the best two days they'd ever spent in their lives. At the time, they were just working sales guys like me, but they went on to tremendous success in their careers. Several of them became millionaires and multimillionaires. So I figured I had a ball game.

Then I went back to Denis and said, "Let's go out and sell this." And as a result of getting into professional speaking, I learned to sell again. I sold my house. I sold my car, my furniture, and my investments, and I used my savings. I ended up in a rented house. I ran up my credit cards and borrowed from everybody I knew because I had no idea what I was doing.

My first "sailing day" was into an economic storm where the markets were collapsing and nobody would attend seminars. I was charging \$295 for a weekend seminar, and my first public presentation—which was supposed to be sold by Denis—ended up with only seven people in attendance. Of

those seven people, six were free. Two were my brother and his wife, two couples were friends of mine, and one person paid \$295.

The hotel facility alone plus travel and everything else came to around \$2,000. That was my first paid seminar. The only paying customer didn't come up with the cash for two months. I had to hound him to finally pay. That was my beginning.

After that, I called on companies to sell my seminar. They said "No. No way. We've never heard of you before. Don't know anything about your seminar. No. Not interested." So I pulled back, tried to figure out what I could do, and came up with a strategy. I wouldn't *sell* my seminar, but I'd give it away.

I started calling on the heads of sales organizations in the fields of real estate, insurance, office supplies, and so on. I would start the meeting with a terrific presentation about how they could learn how to set goals, overcome obstacles, remain positive, solve problems, get along better with others, get better results in their personal and work life, increase their sales, and so on. I'd tell them all the benefits that would come from my seminar.

When I was done, they would ask, "What's the deal?" I'd say, "I would like you to come for free. I would like to invite you and your spouse to come to my weekend seminar in which you will learn all these fabulous things. And if you like the seminar, then let's look at bringing all of your salespeople through it." And that turned my life around in the middle of a terrible recession.

My First Paid Gig

My first paid speech was to a construction association dinner meeting, and I remember it clearly in my mind. These were construction managers and supervisors—tough guys, and all drinkers. They brought their wives, and they had an open bar for one hour. Nobody drank wine, beer, or spritzers—they drank hard liquor. So by the time they were called in for dinner, everybody was drunk. They all sat down, and there was a bottle of white and one of red wine at each table, and the bar remained open at the back.

I had spent four or five hours preparing my twenty-minute talk and how I was going to deliver it. I had about twenty-five great ideas on how to get organized and manage yourself and your business and motivate people—vastly too much material, but I was determined to present it well.

When I finally got up to speak, the whole audience was incredibly drunk, leaning forward and blinking their eyes trying to appear sober. They were knocking over glasses and laughing, and people got up and lurched over to the bar to get more drinks. So my first paid talk, for \$150, was to a loaded crew of construction people.

Why am I sharing this story? Because your first paid gig might not be your ideal speaking gig. But the experience and the stage time will set you up for the future.

Plus, you never know what kind of audience you'll get.

If I hadn't learned how to spend five hours preparing a twenty-minute talk, then I wouldn't have gotten my big break...

Getting Future Clients

One of the first clients I ever had was a division of Caterpillar. It took about two months, but they agreed to have me in because one of their people had been through my seminar, had really liked it, and had pushed it hard within the company.

They opened it up to all of their staff and their spouses or significant others. This was in about my third year of speaking. It was quite successful, and in that group was a technical representative from IBM. After the seminar, he called IBM headquarters in Toronto (I was living in Canada) and told them he had to speak to the president of IBM.

Well, IBM has an open door policy where anybody in the company can go above their supervisor or manager if they have any problems or concerns. This guy had been pretty happy up until now, so this set off a couple of alarm bells. But a senior person called him back to find out what was going on.

The representative said, “I’ve just been through this fabulous seminar, and it was so good that IBM should host it.” This led to them calling me up and inviting me to come down and do an audition—a one-hour talk to twenty-three managers, which they would preview.

I worked like crazy preparing the talk and delivering it. When I was finished, they had me sit outside for an hour while they discussed it.

Finally, they called me back in and told me they liked my talk, and with a couple of modifications, they wanted me to give it as a leadership talk to their managers. Would I be willing to do that? I said, “Absolutely.” This led to me speaking for IBM twenty-nine times over the next three years. They booked me once a month, and it literally made my career.

They opened doors for me that might never have been opened for me. I could now say I was one of the most popular speakers for IBM, and that credibility helped my speaking career take off. IBM paid me well, and every single time I did a talk, I reviewed it carefully with the people who brought me in and upgraded it and improved it.

You never know where your future clients will come from, so get as much stage time as possible.

CHAPTER

3

CREATING YOUR VISION

As a speaker, you can create amazing change in people's lives. In this section, you'll learn about what it takes to become an excellent speaker and the importance of your unique story.

The Change You Can Make

At one of my seminars, I spoke to two people there that I remember in particular. Each of them was running a business on the verge of collapse. One had a family shipbuilding and repair business. When I asked him how it was going, he told me it wasn't going great because of the current economy. They had been in business for over thirty years, and he had inherited it from his parents. He didn't say very much else.

About a month later, he was talking to one of our seminar trainers, saying that when he came to the seminar, the business was actually going broke and he hadn't wanted to admit that to me.

He had to fight with his wife and brother, who worked in the company, to actually get to the seminar. Attendance was \$1,997 for one person and they could bring someone else, so he brought his wife. At that point, they had all but decided to shut the business down. This was their last chance. They figured they would come to this seminar, and it would be the last chance.

But after the seminar, they had so many ideas of what they could do with their business that they went back and called everybody together to tell them they would be doing things differently. In the month after the seminar, their sales were up forty-one percent. Their business—and their livelihood—went from a dying company to one now on fire.

This is the kind of change you can create as a professional speaker.

How Do You Start?

But how do you get started?

There are many ways to start. I actually wanted to be a trainer, and I backed into speaking. Most people start off with a twenty-minute talk and work their way up. Then they get a ninety-minute slot, and so they add a whole bunch of material to their talk. Pretty soon they get a half day, and then a full day, and sometimes longer. I started with two days and worked back to twenty minutes, even fifteen minutes.

There is a rule that I learned from the former president of the National Speakers Association, Patricia Fripp, after I'd been speaking for about four years. She said that it takes seven years to become a successful professional speaker. I felt that couldn't be true.

She was speaking to 1,000 people, and she explained her career and her history. She began as a hairdresser before starting to speak. It took her seven years to become an independent professional speaker at high rates. I decided that was not going to happen to me, and yet it also took me seven years.

What I learned later, based on years of research, is that it takes two years of looking for and chasing down every single opportunity for stage time in order to learn your craft. Two years of recording, critiquing, reviewing, and

upgrading your skills. Many people quit speaking after two years because they realize they're not good and they're never going to be good.

It takes two more years for you to actually earn good money speaking. In my first two years, as I said, I went deeply, deeply into debt and almost into bankruptcy. I was able to avoid that by going hat in hand and begging my creditors not to foreclose on me. So in the next two years, I paid them all back.

The next three years are when you start to make money, and after seven years, if all goes well, you break out of the pack. After seven years of hard work, it is like breaking into the lead in a marathon. Malcolm Gladwell says the same thing in his book *Outliers*. It takes seven years and 10,000 hours of hard work to break into the top ten percent of your field. But if you work hard and persist, you will get there.

Remember The Four Ds To Speaking Excellence

As I said before, to become a 6-Figure Speaker you must have the four Ds:

Desire. First, you must have the burning *desire* to speak well. If it's strong enough, and you want to master the art of speaking long enough, nothing can stop you from achieving this goal. But desire is not enough.

Decision. You must make a *decision* this very day, this very moment, that you are going to do whatever it takes and overcome any obstacle to become excellent.

Discipline. You have to have the *discipline* to plan, prepare, and deliver your talks, over and over again, until you are a master. There are no shortcuts.

Determination. Finally, you have to have the *determination* to keep going in spite of any setback, obstacle, or embarrassment you may experience.

If you have these, then nothing will stop you from becoming the 6-Figure Speaker you desire to be.

But there is yet another component you need. You need to have a message.

Your Unique Story

As a speaker, your message is important. But another thing is also important: What makes you unique?

When you're really clear about who your audience is and what they need, then be really clear about your special, unique, differentiated message. Why is your message different from that of everyone else? Why should people buy from you rather than someone else?

People will pay a dollar for a program with information, but they'll pay \$10 for a program with information plus a story. I began this message with my own story. I talked about how I began and what I learned and how it helped me.

Telling your own story about how you learned these ideas and the difference they made in your life makes your product unique, different, special, and incapable of being duplicated by anyone else, anywhere.

I suggest always starting off with your story and then lacing your presentations and programs with your story so that people are clear that this is different and better. What you offer should come from the heart. This is one of the most important things that you can do.

Summary

- You can change someone's life for the better as a speaker.
- It can take up to seven years to become a professional speaker.
- To become a 6-Figure Speaker, you must have the *Desire*, you must make the *Decision*, you must have the *Discipline*, and you must have the *Determination* to succeed.

PART 2

BECOMING A GREAT COMMUNICATOR

Now that you know what it takes to become a 6-Figure Speaker, you're going to learn how to become a great communicator. You'll learn the one job your speech has, how to overcome the fear of public speaking, and how to make the perfect presentation so that your audience and hosts beg you for more.

CHAPTER

4

YOUR GOAL AS A SPEAKER

Your goal as a speaker is simple. It's to impel, influence, and persuade the audience to perform a specific action that would not have taken place in your absence. That is your objective as a speaker.

For example, in Ancient Greece, when Demosthenes spoke, people commented, "What a fine speaker he is."

But when Alcibiades spoke, they took up arms and said, "Let us march!"

Your job is to do the latter. Your audience should think, feel, and act differently as a direct result of your speech. Your job is to motivate them to "march!"

The good news is that this is something you can learn. If you can type on a keyboard, operate a microwave oven, or use a cell phone, then you can learn to become an effective speaker and motivate your audience to take action.

Your Speech Has A Job To Do

One way to do this is to remember what Peggy Noonan, speechwriter for Ronald Reagan once said:

“Every speech has a job to do.”

Your speech has one job, one objective, and you have to get clear on it.

Before you speak, start with the end in mind. What do you want your talk to accomplish?

Something I use is the “objective question” to guide how I plan my talks. It goes like this: If they interviewed people after my talk and asked them, *‘What did you get from this speech and what are you going to do differently as a result?’* what would I want them to say?

Once you have the answer, plan and prepare your speech so that everything, from the opening to the closing remarks, is aimed at achieving this goal.

You can also use this question with your clients. Ask them what they want the audience to feel, think, and act after you’ve delivered your talk. This will not only help you to motivate the audience to the desired result but will also ensure you are delivering what your clients want, increasing your chances of being booked again.

Next you’ll learn how to overcome the major obstacle that stops most people from succeeding in public speaking.

Summary

- Your audience should feel and act differently after your speech.
- Every speech has a job to do.
- Ask yourself and your hosts the objective question: *What do you want the audience to get from this speech, and what do you want them to do differently as a result of the speech?*

CHAPTER

5

OVERCOMING THE FEAR OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

Fifty-four percent of adults fear public speaking over dying. Yet this fear of speaking means many people won't get ahead in their careers.

Your goal when speaking is to stand up confidently and to be positive, relaxed, and feeling wonderful. Yet how do you get to this state just before you deliver a talk?

That's what you'll learn in this section. You'll learn to overcome your fear of public speaking.

All Fears Are Learned

The good news is that you came to this world with no fears at all. All fears you have as an adult were created during your childhood, through experience and negative reinforcement.

But just as these fears, including the fear of speaking in front of an audience, have been learned, they can also be unlearned.

Destructive criticism during childhood is the main cause of fears in adults. When parents destructively criticize a child for whatever reason, the child soon develops fears of failure and rejection. This fear of rejection leads to being hypersensitive to the opinions of others later in life.

But if you can unlearn this fear of criticism, then the sky is the limit.

Start With Your Message

Confident public speaking begins with having a message that you really want people to hear. This is extremely important.

As long as you have the desire to share a message that you feel strongly about, you have won half the battle with your fear of public speaking.

If you're just in it for the money or for the praise and acclaim, you won't get too far. You might be able to learn to calm your nerves, but you'll never be able to connect with your audience. And it's all about your audience.

The Audience Is On Your Side

Here's a realization that might change your fear of public speaking.

Have you ever gone to a movie hoping it would be a terrible movie and a waste of your time? Of course not! When you go to a movie, you are rooting for the film. You are wishing and hoping that it will justify the time and expense you have invested. That it will thrill you and change how you think and feel.

It's the same when you give a talk.

The audience is on your side. They are rooting for you. They are all hoping and wishing for you to succeed, just like if they were attending a prize ceremony for you. They are there to cheer you on. They strongly desire that your talk will be successful and enjoyable.

Here's another way of thinking about it. When you stand up to speak, you start with an *A*. You start off with a top grade. Your job is simple. It's to keep your *A* during the course of your talk.

Just as with any fear, repetitive desensitization will help you develop the confidence to keep your *A*. Practice your talks as much as you can. Practice your talks in front of your friends and family, in front of your colleagues, and in front of the mirror. There is nothing more helpful in developing confidence than repetition.

How to Build Confidence and Competence

Here are a few specific techniques you can use to overcome fear and anxiety when you speak:

Visualize

Improvements in your outer performance begin with an improvement in your mental picture. By creating a clear, uplifting, exciting mental image of yourself speaking effectively and persuasively, your subconscious mind gets programmed to give you the words, feelings, and gestures that are in line with your mental picture.

“See” yourself standing calm, confident, and smiling as you address your audience. See the audience smiling, laughing, and enjoying your talk, hanging on every word you say.

Program Your Mind

Your subconscious mind is more open to suggestion in the last few minutes before you fall asleep and in the first few minutes you're awake than at any other time of the day.

One way to develop confidence in your public speaking is by visualizing yourself giving your talk effectively before you fall asleep. Visualize yourself giving a talk that enthralls your audience, one that motivates them to give you a standing ovation. This will be the last impression on your subconscious mind before you sleep, and it will affect you at a deep level. It will literally program your mind to be calm and confident when it comes to the time for you to deliver your talk.

Last-Minute Confidence Builders

Much of the mental preparation for public speaking can be done far in advance. But there are a few things speakers can do to calm their nerves immediately before speaking and thereby improve their performances.

Pump Yourself Up

Just before you are introduced, psych yourself up mentally. Repeat to you “This is a great talk! I can hardly wait! This is going to be a great speech!”

Say these words with conviction. Imagine you are trying to convince someone else to believe what you’re saying. Your subconscious mind responds best to emotional instruction, so really put your heart into your self-talk.

Think About Your Audience

Before you give your talk, put yourself in a position of power mentally over your audience. For example, imagine that the audience is composed of people who owe you money, and they all came to ask you for more time to pay back.

A mental trick like this will cause you to become far more relaxed when speaking to your audience.

Be Grateful

A final way to increase your confidence with an audience is to adopt an attitude of gratitude. Practice being grateful for the opportunity to speak. Say to yourself how grateful and how privileged you feel for the opportunity to speak to the people before you.

The more grateful you are for the opportunity to speak to your audience, the more positive and enthusiastic you will be, and your fear of the platform will fade away.

The more you see the audience as friends who like you, and whom you like in return, the more relaxed you will be.

Next, you'll learn how to deliver the perfect presentation that will inspire and awe your audience.

Summary

- All fears are learned from childhood.
- Just as fears are learned, you can unlearn them.
- A desire to share your message will help you overcome your anxiety.
- The audience is on your side during your talk. They want you to do well.
- Visualize giving an excellent talk in order to reduce your butterflies before your speech.
- Practice pumping yourself up, thinking about your audience, and being grateful just before you give your talk to reduce your fear.

CHAPTER

6

THE PERFECT PRESENTATION

There's one surefire way to earn more money as a speaker and get resales and referrals, and that's to deliver the perfect presentation. The kind of presentation that amazes your audience and delights your hosts.

In this section, you'll learn what goes into the perfect presentation. You'll learn the importance of preparation and how to prepare for success. You'll learn how to present a seamless talk, and how to open and end with a bang.

The Care Ingredient

First, before you do anything, you've got to care about the subject and care about how the subject can have a positive influence on other people. This is really, really important.

There are subjects that I think are important, like customer service. I teach it as part of my larger business programs. But I never get really excited about it. I never promote the subject and it's not on my website because the people who take customer service courses are usually clerks and lower level

telemarketers, and they are really not my market. I want salespeople and managers.

Usually, my talks go well with this market. Why? Because I care about the change I can make in their lives. Once you care, connecting with the audience and engaging them becomes much easier.

The Length Of Your Talk

There was once a meeting planner who phoned a professional speaker in order to book him for an upcoming event. The planner's first question was "How much do you charge?"

The speaker replied, "It depends on the length of the talk you want me to give and the amount of time it takes for preparation."

The meeting planner then asked, "How much would you charge for a thirty-minute talk, and how long would it take to prepare?"

The speaker replied, "For a thirty-minute talk, it would require six to eight hours to prepare, and the fee would be \$5,000."

The meeting planner was surprised. "How much would you charge for a half-day talk, and how long would it take to prepare?" he asked.

The speaker replied, "For a half-day talk, it would take about three to four hours to prepare, and it would cost \$4,000."

"What about a full-day talk? How much is that?"

"That would only cost \$3,000."

"How long would you require to prepare?" asked the meeting planner.

"Oh," said the speaker, "if it is a full-day talk, I can start now."

The Shorter the Talk, the More Difficult

The point of the previous story is that the shorter the talk is, the greater you must prepare. You have to prepare in order to precisely narrow things down for the time constraints given.

If you have all day to speak, you can fill time with stories, examples, and various subjects around your talk. However, if you have only twenty minutes, you must focus on the key elements required to get your message across.

How to Prepare

Preparation is important.

I always spend a lot of time in preparation because preparation is ninety percent of good speaking. It is really important that you prepare—and then prepare some more. Don't leave a single ingredient to chance.

Remember the acronym CANEI, which means continuous and never-ending improvement. Read everything you possibly can on speaking. You should have a whole library of books and recordings on speaking. This will save you years of work in learning how to speak well.

Go and listen to other speakers. Ask questions and ask for advice. Ask what things most influenced them. Listen to audio programs in your car. There are countless audio programs on how to speak well. Listen to them over and over again.

Get critiques on your speaking and give critiques when you attend other speakers' engagements. Take notes and give your input. All of this will accelerate the speed at which you get better.

During an interview I did recently, they asked me what the key is to success in speaking. I told them that it is preparation. Ninety percent of all speaking success is preparation. Prepare thoroughly. Think it through, write it out, and go over it. You practice and review, and practice and review. Make sure you're well-rested, but nothing is more important than preparation.

Here's what I do to prepare.

Do Your Homework

Before you go and talk to an audience consisting of professionals, you must find out everything that is going on in their industry and market. Are things going well, or are things in a downturn? Is the company growing or declining in the current market? What are the business and political trends that are affecting them?

Here are some other things to look out for when planning and preparing a speech.

Find Out What the Local Environment Is Like

Find out what is going on in the city which you're speaking. In several cases, I've spoken in cities where the local team either won or lost a championship recently. It's important to be aware of this and to bring it up in your introductory remarks. If you don't, the audience will be preoccupied with the sporting event, and you'll feel like an outsider, unable to connect with your audience.

Keep In Mind Who Else They've Heard Lately

You should also learn about what else your audience has heard recently and their experience with speakers. Who else has spoken to them, and what about? How did they react to the other speakers? Did they like what they heard, or were they disappointed?

In longer events, it's important to find out who's speaking before you. What will they speak on? Not only will this help you transition smoothly from the previous speaker, but it'll also make sure you don't find yourself repeating something the audience has already heard.

Start with the End In Mind

If you recall the "objective question" I mentioned earlier, if you could interview the audience and ask, "What did you learn from my talk and what are you going to do differently as a result?" what would you want their responses to be? The more specific this answer is, the easier it will be to structure your talk around this point and achieve your goal in the time allotted.

Now that you know how to prepare your talk, it's time to learn how to present it.

Planning a Smooth Delivery

For every occasion, a speaker has three talks. First, there is the talk the speaker plans to give. Second, there is the talk that speaker actually delivers in front of the audience. Third, there is the talk the speaker wishes he had given as he reflects on the way home.

The very best talk you can give is when all three turn out to be the same.

Now that you've done your preparation, here are some tips on how to achieve this objective.

Move Seamlessly from Point to Point

Design your transitions from point to point so that it's clear to your audience that you have finished with one point and are moving on to the next. This will keep them engaged and clear up any potential confusion over your material.

Go over your subject often and continue to be on the lookout for ways to improve the quality and smooth delivery of your ideas.

Practice – It Pays Off

Practice and preparation are worth their weight in gold.

A few years ago, I was booked to give a talk to an audience of potential clients. If they were sufficiently impressed, I knew I could get booked for future work. I therefore spent an excessive amount of time preparing, and more importantly, practicing and rehearsing my speech. In the end, I reviewed that speech fifty times before I gave it to the huge audience at the convention center.

All the practice and rehearsals paid off. The speech was recorded. It was distributed worldwide and was eventually viewed by tens of thousands of people in multiple languages. Some years later, this speech was ranked as one of the twelve best speeches ever given out of more than a thousand to this particular firm over a thirty-seven-year period.

Practice, practice, and practice your speech. It'll pay off.

Put Your Points on Index Cards

If you're using a podium, consider putting your key points on three-by-five-inch or five-by-eight-inch index cards in large letters. Write out key sentences, ideas, and phrases, and use these to jog your memory as you speak.

You may think this will make you look incompetent, but this is far from the truth. I have seen quite accomplished and highly respected speakers stand in front of audiences with several index cards in their hands, using them as props during their talk. The audience never objects. They all know that this is how the speaker keeps his thoughts organized. They also recognize that the speaker has researched and prepared thoroughly to get to this point.

Give Your Talk to Small Groups First

A final way you can ensure you give a smooth delivery is to give your talk to smaller, friendlier groups multiple times before you get in front of a larger, less personal audience.

I once attended a board meeting that was to be followed by a major dinner. One of the board members began speaking thoroughly on a particular subject. Because his thoughts were well-organized, we listened to him as he spoke and developed his argument, point by point, for twenty minutes. At the end, everybody was impressed with his thoughts and ideas.

That evening, in front of 500 people at the dinner, he stood up and gave the identical speech he had given at the boardroom table. In retrospect, the board meeting had been his final dry run for what became a very important and consequential talk to a large group of important people.

Now that you know how to plan a smooth delivery, there is still one missing ingredient. How can you structure your talk to hook and engage your audience?

A Simple Structure for Short Talks

Here is a simple three-part structure you can use to design any speech. You can use it for a quick one-minute presentation or a thirty-minute talk.

Part One

This is the opening. You simply open with what you're going to say in your speech.

For example, "Thank you for being here. In the next few minutes, I want to tell you about the three problems facing our company today and the actions we can take to turn them to our advantage in the upcoming year."

An opening like this sets the stage, prepares the audience, and gives your speech a path to follow.

Part Two

The second part is where you deliver on the promise of the opening. You talk about the subject of the talk. It can consist of one, two, or three points. If you're pressed for time, it should only include three key points developed in sequence.

For example, "We are facing technological disruption, changing market conditions, and a lack of trained staff. Let us look at each of these, in order, and consider methods of dealing with them effectively."

Part Three

Here you summarize what you just told the audience. Don't expect your listeners to remember everything you have said the first time they heard it. Summarizing and repeating is useful and enjoyable for your audience.

The PREP Formula

Once you have your points, you can use the "PREP" formula for each point in your presentation.

P: Point of View

State your opinion, idea, or fact at the beginning.

R: Reasons

State your reasons for holding this point of view.

E: Example

Reinforce your point of view with an example.

P: Point of View

Restate your first “P” to emphasize your idea and to come full circle.

Here’s the PREP formula in action:

(P: Point of View) “More people are going to make more money in the next ten years than in the last hundred years.”

(R: Reasons) “The number of millionaires and billionaires has increased by sixty percent in the last five years, and the rate of increase is accelerating.”

(E: Example) “In 1900, there were 5,000 millionaires in America and no billionaires. By the year 2000, there were 5,000,000 millionaires and more than 500 billionaires. By 2007, according to *BusinessWeek* magazine, there were 8,900,000 millionaires in the United States and over 700 billionaires worldwide.”

(P: Point of View) “There have never been more opportunities for you, the creative minority, to achieve financial success than exist today—except for those that will exist tomorrow and in the years ahead.”

Now that you’ve learned how to prepare your points, you may be thinking, “But how do I start?” That’s what you’re going to learn next.

Summary

- The shorter your talk, the more you have to prepare to deliver a focused message.
- Do your homework so that you know the demographics of your audience.
- You can prepare for a smooth delivery by taking some critical steps while preparing your speech.

- There are three parts to every good talk—opening with what you’re going to say, presenting your ideas, and summarizing your ideas.
- The PREP formula is a powerful method you can utilize to present each of your ideas.

CHAPTER

7

THE MOST IMPORTANT PARTS OF YOUR SPEECH

You've been introduced, and you're now in the spotlight. How do you open and start your speech? Here are a few ideas you can use to start your talk effectively. They are all designed to engage your audience from the beginning so that you have their full attention for your entire speech.

Thank the Organizers

Start by thanking the audience for coming and the organization for inviting you to speak. Refer to the person who introduced you, and if possible, one of the senior people in the organization who's in the audience.

This complements them and makes them feel proud and happy about inviting you. It also connects you directly to the audience.

Start with a Positive Statement

Tell the audience how much they will enjoy what you have to say. For example, "You are really going to enjoy what's coming up. I'm going to share with you some of the most important ideas on how you can get the success you desire."

Refer to Current Events

Use a current front-page news story to transition into your subject and to illustrate your point of view. You can use a copy of the newspaper as you refer to it in your introduction. This visual aid and a story that's on everyone's minds will capture the audience's attention and get them curious about the rest of your talk.

Start with a Story

Consider starting your talk with a story. The words "once upon a time..." are some of the most attention-grabbing words in the English language.

From childhood, people love stories of any kind. When you start off with "once upon a time," you tell the audience that a story is coming. People immediately settle down and become quiet and attentive. During full-day seminars, when I want to bring people back to their seats after a break, I will say loudly "Once upon a time, there was a man, right here in this city..."

As soon as I utter these words, people rush back to their seats and begin to listen to the rest of the story.

You know how to start your talk. But how do you end? How can you close your speech such that your audience is in awe?

End with a Bang: Leave Them Breathless!

A good speech is like a good movie. It opens by capturing the viewers' attention, develops point by point, and then ends strongly.

The words you utter at the beginning, and especially at the end of your talk, will be remembered far longer than any other part of your speech. Some of the greatest speeches in history have ended with stirring words that live on in memory.

Consider Winston Churchill's tribute to the pilots of the Royal Air Force during World War II, who were fighting and dying against the German Luftwaffe: "Never in human history have so many owed so much to so few." These are words that are remembered in Great Britain to this day.

Here are a few ideas on how to create a strong ending.

Plan Your Ending Word for Word

To have a powerful conclusion, you must plan it word for word.

Remember the objective question, “What is the purpose of this talk?” What action do you want the listeners to take after you speak? When you are clear about this end result, it becomes much easier to design a conclusion that asks your audience to take that action.

The best method to end with a bang is to plan your close before you plan the rest of the speech. Then go back and design your opening and everything else to set the stage of your conclusion.

End with a Call to Action

It’s important to tell your listeners what you want them to do as a result of hearing you speak. Every speech has a job to do. You must make them “march.” A call to action is the best way to wrap up your message with strength and power.

Here’s an example: “There are great challenges and great opportunities facing us, and with your help, we will meet them and make this our best year in history!”

Imagine there’s an exclamation point at the end of anything you say. Imagine you are a conductor setting the audience up for a crescendo. Pick up your energy and tempo, speak with strength and emphasis, and then drive the final point home.

It doesn’t matter if the audience agrees with you or not. What’s important is that they clearly know your request.

Close with a Summary

A simple formula for a talk: Tell them what you’re going to tell them. Tell them. Then tell them what you told them.

As you conclude, you could say, “Let me briefly restate these main points...” You then list your key points and repeat them to the audience, showing how each of them is linked.

Audiences appreciate this reminder, and it also makes it clear that you are approaching the end of your talk.

Close with a Story

Stories are powerful.

As you end your talk, you can say, “Let me tell you a story that demonstrates what I have been talking about...” You then tell a brief story with a moral, and then tell the audience what the moral is. Don’t leave it for them to work out.

Often you can finish with a story that illustrates your key points and then clearly reflects the key message of your speech.

A Standing Ovation

If you’ve delivered a moving speech, here’s how to end with a bang.

If your message really connected with your audience, someone will stand up and applaud. When this happens, you can encourage the others by looking directly at the clapper and saying, “Thank you.”

This will often prompt other members of the audience to stand. As people see others standing, they will stand up as well, applauding the whole time.

A standing ovation is not only recognition of the quality of your presentation but also signals to the audience the special ingredient of your talk. A unique event that won’t happen again. Something to cherish in memory.

Summary

- How you start with your speech determines how engaged your audience will be throughout your talk.
- A few ideas on how to start a speech include thanking the organizers, using a positive statement, referring to current events, and starting with a story.
- Ending strongly is one of the most important things you can do to ensure your speech lasts in your audience's memory.

- You can end strongly by planning your end before you write your speech, using a call to action, ending with a summary, and using a story.
- A standing ovation is one of the most effective ways to end with a bang and can be used if a few audience members strongly connect with your message.

CHAPTER

8

BECOMING THE TOP 20%

Every excellent speaker starts somewhere. The top twenty percent of speakers were once in the bottom twenty percent of speakers. Here are some of the tips and strategies I've learned throughout my career by watching others enter the top twenty percent of speakers.

Becoming a Top 20% Speaker

Getting into the top twenty percent requires **excellent subject knowledge**. You need a subject that people really want and need and care about, and you need to be really knowledgeable on that subject.

The rule in writing is that you must know ten words about your subject for every word that you write. The rule in speaking, which comes from Dale Carnegie's professional speaker training organization, is that you should know about forty or fifty words for every word you speak. This means that planning a twenty-minute talk will take eight to ten hours the first time you give it.

For a twenty-minute talk, I have spent two and three days planning. The second time, you only have to spend a day, and the third time maybe only

three or four hours. The fourth time might take two or three hours. But every single time I give a short talk, it takes two to three hours to plan, review it, and polish it. It's like polishing all the different facets of a diamond.

So number one is excellent subject knowledge, which you never stop learning and developing. Many speakers won't do this part, which is why they never reach the top twenty percent of speakers. They'll learn their subject, give a talk that people like, and pretty much stop learning in that area. They just recycle the talk and find a new audience rather than create a new talk or improve the existing one.

There are two types of presentations in paid speaking. One is what I call PTBS: Problem To Be Solved. Every single speech is an opportunity to solve a problem that the listeners have.

As always, clarity is the critical word here. You've got to be clear about what problem your speech is going to solve and what answers it's going to give. How is it going to help people? Even a motivational speech is intended to help people, motivate them, help them focus, and channel their energies.

The second type is JTD: Job To Do. Every talk has a job to do, so you have to ask, what is the job this talk will do? What will people be able to do afterward?

So let's say you have a subject that you think is of great interest, and you think business people and even non-business people could benefit from it. Remember that ninety-five percent of speaking is finding an audience. So you have to find an organization that already has an audience. Somebody is already putting meetings together.

Your subject should always answer the question "What is the problem to be solved?" or "What is the job to be done?" A talk is a tool to help people get from where they are to where they could be. So decide on your subject and the problem that your subject solves. The amount you can charge will be determined by how valuable your solution is.

The second thing you need is the ability to give an excellent presentation. You need to get really, really good at conveying your

material. There is a little joke that asks, “Do you have to be funny when you speak?” And the answer is “No, only if you want to get paid.” You could probably extend that. Do you have to use stories when you speak? Yes, if you want to get paid. Getting paid is the goal.

If you want to get paid, you’re going to have to make it funny, interesting, and punchy. Some of the top politicians you see on the front pages of newspapers speak all the time to private groups, and every one of them is funny. They speak about some of the most important subjects in our world today, but they make it light and funny. They tell stories, and they give examples. And they get standing ovations. People really enjoy listening to a person speaking about serious subjects when it’s done right.

The next thing you need to do is get absolutely specific about who exactly is the customer who will pay you to speak. Remember there are always two customers when you are speaking—the payer and the payee. The payee is the person who is going to listen to you speak. They are the ones to whom you are speaking. And the payer is the one who is bringing you in. Sometimes the messages these two want are a little bit different.

Once I was booked by a national company, and they wanted me to motivate this group after they had just announced they were cutting all their commissions in half, restricting their territories, and also selling directly to their customers instead of giving out exclusive territories. If their employees sold, they could make a commission, but other than that, the company would use telemarketers to sell to customers before the salesperson got there.

All of these people who had worked for ten and fifteen years building their client base were having their chairs cut out from under them because the company wanted to make more money. They made this big announcement, and then they wanted me to get up and motivate them.

I’ll tell you, I’ve never spoken to a bunch of more negative, glum people in my whole life. So I spoke about having faith in yourself, setting goals, raising standards, and other personal development topics. The company was very happy with my talk. The audience was just angry.

So you always have two customers. You have the people you’re speaking to and the person you’re speaking for. Always ask the meeting planner—the

payer—what would have to happen as a result of your talk to make them feel they got really good value. Always find out the answer to that question. Then design your talk so it achieves that result.

Now, your talk has to have a juicy title. For instance, one of my talks is *Seven Ways to Maximize Your Income in Any Market*. You need a title that answers these questions:

- What's in it for me?
- Why should I book you?
- What's the result I'll get?

It has to be something that causes people to say, “I want to hear about that! I want to know about that!” It has to be something that appeals to people instantly and makes them come to hear you.

The next point in getting into the world of paid speaking is a description of the transformation that will take place. I cannot emphasize this enough. It's all about what the transformation will be, not what's in the talk.

When you talk about your speech, always describe it in terms of the transformation, change, or outcome that will occur when people listen to your talk. Never talk about the content. Talk about the outcome.

So the most important words in describing your talk are the words that follow the phrase “You will learn how to.” Then you have bullet points, and every bullet point starts with an imperative verb. “You will learn how to: motivate people under every circumstance; get people to cooperate with each other; build winning teams; focus and channel best efforts on your greatest opportunities.” Every single transformational statement that you offer to teach people in a keynote or in a seminar always starts with these kinds of bullet points.

In one of mine, I say, “Learn how to dramatically increase your sales and profitability in any market. In this fast-moving and exciting talk, you learn powerful, practical, proven methods and techniques practiced by all of the top businesses and business people in small- and medium-sized companies worldwide.” Then I say, “In this seminar, you will learn how to...” I learned many years ago that the most powerful words describing your seminar are the words that follow that colon.

What follows “You will learn how to” are bullet points, and each one of those starts with a verb. Every single bullet starts with a compelling imperative verb.

- Set clear goals for every part of your business
- Determine priorities and work on high-value tasks
- Select the best people and keep them focused
- Create faster solutions
- Motivate people to peak performance

So when a person asks what you speak on, your summary statement is around the result or benefit. The end result sounds like, “I show people how to increase their sales faster and easier in any market.”

In the last paragraph of my talk description, I write “Brian Tracy has spoken to more than 5,000 audiences in sixty countries around the world over the last thirty years and has addressed more than five million people. In this seminar, he will teach you some of the most important things he’s ever learned.”

Those are some proven ideas on how to get into the top twenty percent of speakers.

What’s Your Specialty?

To stand out as a speaker, you have to specialize.

Specialize and focus on a single subject. If someone asks what your subject is, you say “I show leaders how to get the very best out of each person that reports to them.” The response? “Great. All of our managers would like to hear that.”

A friend of mine specializes in one particular aspect of real estate sales. Another good friend of mine specializes in how to generate leads online. Another teaches people how to sell cars. They *all* specialize.

There are people who specialize in teaching people how to sell high-priced houses while others teach how to sell foreclosures. In other words, what

you have to do is specialize in an area where there are people who want to learn that subject and will come to hear about it and pay you for it. So pick something that people really want.

Sell Days, & Sell As Many As You Can

Finally, to get into the top twenty percent of speakers, you have to sell as many days as you can.

My goal and business philosophy is to sell days, and even to sell hours. I look at my year in terms of how many days I'm booked. I just did an interview this morning for *Speaker Magazine* for the National Speakers Association (NSA), and that was their first question: "How many days are you on the road? How many days do you speak?"

About a year or two after I began speaking and working hard, I met a friend of mine who was very successful in real estate development. He asked me what I was doing and how it was going. I told him I was doing well. He said, "I don't know anything about your business. How do you define 'well' in speaking?" That stopped me and made me think. I realized that the way you define doing well in speaking is how often you speak and how much you get paid each time.

My whole focus has been on how much I can charge per talk and how many times I can charge it.

There may have been a time in our lives or in the market when the fees were high, but the only real measure is if you're fully booked. You can tell if your price is right. It's basically the Law of Marginal Utility—supply and demand. If your price is right and you want to speak one hundred times a year, then you can be fully booked at one hundred times a year.

Your job is to increase your speaking time. You're much better off on the stage at a lower income than you are at home with no income at all. The more you speak, the more income you'll earn, and the more practice you'll get. The more practice you get, the better a speaker you'll become.

Summary

- Specialize your talks in areas that people want to learn more about and are willing to pay you for.
- Each speech has a job to do.
- Give your talk a juicy title.
- You have two customers, the people who want you to speak and the people you are speaking to.
- Speak and focus on one subject.
- Sell days, and sell as many as you can.

CHAPTER

9

WORKING THE ROOM

Most of our communication is nonverbal. Just as you focus on your speech and the ideas you'll present, you also have to focus on how to work the room, on how to engage the audience with your physical presence.

Check Out The Facility

Arrive early, preferably the day before, and familiarize yourself with the entire setup. Not only will this make a powerful impression with the event organizers, but it'll avoid potential problems in the future.

Never assume that someone else is going to care as much about the setup as you do. Many of the people who are setting up meeting rooms are minimum wage workers whose entire aim is to get the job done and get out.

Not long ago I was invited to give a ninety-minute talk to 4,000 executives. The company brought in a team of experts to set up the stage, side screens, sound, lighting, and seating. I arrived early, and I was glad I did.

My style of speaking involves writing notes on an overhead projector or an ELMO. I deliver my talk in the center of the stage with the projector by my side so that I can speak and illustrate my ideas, maintaining eye contact with the audience the entire time.

However, the crew had set up the ELMO to the side and at the back of the stage, facing the opposite direction from the audience. This means I'd have to walk away and face away from the audience each time I wanted to make a point. When I pointed this out, as gently as possible, they shrugged their shoulders. After some back and forth, I was able to persuade them to reposition the ELMO.

The talk was a success, but if I had arrived on the day and not been able to reposition the ELMO, it may have been a disaster.

Mix With Your Audience

Your goal is to connect with the audience, and as such, you should get a sense of them before they talk. Mingle with the meeting planners and some of the audience before your talk. Introduce yourself and try to learn a bit about them.

Audience members always enjoy talking to the speaker, and you also get to know what they are thinking and feeling. This will increase your connection with your audience and help you deliver an outstanding talk.

Look Directly at People in the Audience

As you speak, if you look directly at a person, everyone behind that person, forming a "V" shape, feels like you are speaking directly to them.

Look and speak directly at members of your audience in all four parts of the room. The more people feel you are speaking to them, the more connected they'll feel, and the more engaged they'll be with your message.

Creating Audience Rapport

The more your audience likes you, the more open they will be to being influenced and persuaded by you.

Smile and be warm and genial when you stand before them. The more you enjoy yourself, the more the audience will enjoy being with you. The more people like you, the more receptive they'll be to your message.

Build audience involvement by asking questions. People are conditioned to answer questions. Even if they don't know the answer or it's a rhetorical

question, a question grabs a person's attention. A question forces them to search their minds for an answer. A question engages your audience.

The more engaged your audience, the more they like you, and the more open they'll be to take action on what you say.

Next you'll learn how to make persuasive presentations. You'll learn how to sell your products and services from the stage.

Summary

- Arrive early to ensure that everything is prepared the way you want it.
- Mix with your audience and your hosts before your talk.
- Be warm and use questions to build rapport with your audience on stage.



CHAPTER

10

PERSUASION AND INFLUENCE



Everyone is in sales of some kind. No matter what you do, you're concerned with persuading others to see your point of view. Whether you're getting your spouse to go out to dinner or getting your children to go to bed, you're making a sale.

No one thinks of themselves this way. I was once addressing a roomful of senior accountants in a large firm. They'd brought me in to speak on the techniques of persuasion. I started with a simple question, "How many people here are in sales?"

The room went silent. One reason an accountant chooses accounting as a profession is they'll never have to sell anything to anyone, leaving the potential for rejection very low.

I paused for a second and followed up with, "Perhaps I didn't ask the question clearly enough. How many people here are *really* in sales?"

After a few more seconds of silence, the senior executive of the organization caught on. He slowly raised his hand and then looked around. As the other accountants saw the top man with his hand up, one by one it dawned on them that they were in sales as well.

Everyone Is In Sales

I then asked, “How many of you are here because you have the ability to bring in new business for the firm? How much of your income and your promotability depends upon your ability to increase the number of clients of the firm and your annual billings?”

Everyone raised their hands. “So,” I said, “everyone here is in sales. The only question is, how good are you at selling?”

It doesn’t matter who you are, your success in life will come from your ability to sell.

Selling Yourself, Selling Your Ideas

Public speaking is a form of selling. The principles that apply to making a sales presentation are the same principles that apply to speaking in public.

The more audience members like and trust you, the lower their fears are of accepting your message. The more they trust you, the more open they are to any recommendations you may make. Just like selling, the purpose of speaking is to persuade people to think and act differently than they would have in your absence.

You have a choice. You can be persuasive and influential, or you can be docile and passive. You can get people to cooperate with you, or you can go along and cooperate with them. The choice is yours.

And here’s the good news—selling is a *learnable* skill. All top salespeople were once poor salespeople. Many people in the top ten percent of sales today started in the bottom ten percent. With practice and repetition, you can learn the skills of selling.

Reduce Their Fear, Increase Your Effectiveness

Everyone fears being manipulated or taken advantage of. No one wants to be sold something they don’t want, don’t need, or can’t afford. No one wants to be talked into something they’ll regret.

Therefore, new prospects are conditioned from past experience to be cautious, doubtful, and suspicious. When you approach them, you trigger an automatic fear of making a mistake. Your first job in persuasive speaking is to reduce that fear and replace it with confidence.

How can you do that?

Well, before I answer that, do you know what the most important word in selling and in social life is?

Credibility. The most important word for success in public affairs, speaking, selling, and business is *credibility*. The more people believe you, the more open they are to being persuaded by you.

If you are credible, then a prospect is more likely to trust you and be open to your influence.

The Seven Steps to Effective Selling

The process of selling to one person, a group, or an audience consists of seven steps. When you speak to persuade, you must remember these seven logical steps. If you miss any one of these, your persuasion efforts will fail.

1. Prospecting

The first step is in finding people who can and will buy your product or service within a reasonable period of time. First you must determine your ideal customer and their demographics.

2. Establishing Rapport and Trust

Then you must build rapport and trust. You do this by asking good questions about what's going on in the prospect's personal and business life and listening attentively to the answers. You then explain how your product or service has helped other people in the same situation as the prospect.

Open and honest questions demonstrate you're interested in the prospect. Listening builds trust. The more they trust you, the more open they are to being influenced by you.

3. Identifying Needs Accurately

Determining that this is a genuine prospect and establishing rapport and trust will get you further ahead in the sales conversation than most people. But it's only when you and the customer agree that they have a genuine and immediate need that your product or service can satisfy that the customer becomes interested.

4. *Making the Presentation*

The fourth stage is to present your product or service in a persuasive way as the ideal choice for this customer. It doesn't have to be perfect—it simply has to be the best choice at the moment to enable the customer to solve the problem.

In your presentation, repeat the information discovered when identifying needs, and then show the prospect step by step how the problem can be solved with your product or service. Your presentation is an act of *showing* the customer that your product or service is the ideal remedy to take away the pain.

5. *Answering Objections*

There are no sales without objections. The prospect will almost always ask you a series of questions about price, terms, conditions, etc.

The best salespeople are those who have thought through every logical objection that a customer might give and have developed a clear and convincing answer to each objection. When the customer brings up the objection, the salesperson acknowledges it, compliments the customer for bringing it up, and then explains how that objection is easily dealt with.

6. *Closing the Sale*

The sixth part of selling is to close the sale. You do this by asking the customer to make a buying decision now.

Your ultimate success will be largely determined by your ability to help the customer overcome any hesitation or doubt and make a firm buying decision.

7. *Resales and Referrals*

The seventh step is to get resales and referrals from your satisfied customers. Take good care of your customers after the sale, especially immediately after they have made a buying decision.

It is right after they've decided to buy that they're most likely to experience buyer's remorse and change their mind. Be prepared for this. Give considerable thought to how you'll treat the customer after the sale. Make them so satisfied that they'll buy again and recommend you to their friends.

Summary

- Everyone is in sales of some kind.
- The same principles involved in selling are involved in influential and persuasive public speaking.
- The most important word in success in public affairs is credibility.
- There are seven stages to an effective sales presentation: *Prospecting; Establishing Rapport and Trust; Identifying Needs Accurately; Making the Presentation; Answering Objections; Closing the Sales; Resales and Referrals.*

PART 3

YOUR ACTION PLAN

Intro, what you'll learn, and how it all fits together

You've learned what it takes to be a great communicator. Now you'll learn how to take action.

You'll learn how to get your first paid gig as a speaker. You'll learn the habits and practices of 6-Figure Speakers, why they do what they do, and why it works.

If you take action on these ideas, you'll be on the road to becoming a 6-Figure Speaker.

CHAPTER

11

YOUR FIRST PAID GIG

The difference between an amateur speaker and a professional speaker is simple. One does it for a hobby, and the other gets paid to speak.

Here are a few ways to get your first paid gig based on my experience and the experiences of other speakers.

Gathering an Audience

I remember, about fifteen years into my career, giving a talk in Chicago for about 1,000 people for a full day, and it was going really well. Then a guy came up during the break and said, “This looks like a pretty good business to get into. You charge \$200 per person, and you’ve got a thousand people here. Five thousand for the room, and the rest is all profit. I’d like to get into this business. How do I do that?”

I asked him if he’d ever spoken before. He said, “There’s nothing to that. You just put together some notes and get up there and tell a few stories. I can do that. My question to you is, how do you get an audience like this? What’s the secret to getting 1,000 people paid in a room?”

Well, in professional speaking, it turns out that ninety-five percent or more of the whole business is getting people to speak to. It's the marketing. It's getting an audience into a room one way or another.

Getting people together in a room is the hardest thing you'll ever do in your whole life. Most speakers have no ability whatsoever to get people into a room. They have to find someone else—somewhere, somehow—who can get the people there for them.

But how do you market yourself to get people in the room?

Marketing Yourself

I once sent brochures to potential clients. I might as well have piled them up in the parking lot and burned them.

I tell this to people: do not do any paid advertising for seminars or speaking. The only time you can pay for advertising is if you're already well-known and you offer a full-day seminar with some of the biggest names in the world. That's the only circumstance where you should advertise.

At the beginning of your professional speaking career, you have to market yourself. If you're not working for a company or organization that will book you and put you in front of audiences, you have to go out and market yourself. You have to do this all day long over a long period of time until finally people begin to offer to pay you to speak. But you can never stop selling.

If you want to sell yourself as a speaker, you have to reverse it. You have to phone people, get them to visit your website and watch your video, and convince them to book you. You also have to realize that if you want a person to book you for a seminar, they are also being called all day long by hundreds or thousands of people from professional speaker businesses whose work it is to make twenty to forty calls a day to organizations that book speakers. So let's say it's a little bit challenging to get booked.

You can always tell if you're serving good food in your restaurant because people come back and bring their friends. You can always tell if you're giving a good seminar because people book you again. The one true

measure of how well you're doing is repeat bookings, those where people book you again and also recommend you to others. By the way, this doesn't happen for a while.

Businesses want increased sales and profitability. So whenever you talk about stuff you do, always give an example or a story of a client of yours who had a need or a problem and how you went in and solved it. And don't talk about everybody being happier afterward or how sales went up or profits increased. Give the actual dollar value of your solution. Give them a very specific number. Odd numbers are even better—for example, a \$42,296,000 increase in sales and profitability running to about thirteen or fourteen percent, or whatever the numbers are.

If you are just starting out, you're going to have to go one step further to ensure your success as a speaker...

Give it Away (At First)

Elbert Hubert is famous for having answered a young aspiring writer who wanted to know how to be successful. He said, "The only way to be successful as a writer is to write and write and write and write." The paraphrase to this is that to be successful as a speaker, you have to speak and speak and speak and speak.

In the world of professional speaking, the aim is to get stage time. Nothing can replace it, and the rule is to get all the stage time you can. Speak for a little, speak for a lot, and speak for free. The more stage time you get, the better you will get, and the more likely it is you'll get more engagements.

Never, ever turn down a talk. Always be thinking about stage time. Always want the chance to speak.

Sometimes you have to take a deep breath and be humble and grateful because within that audience could be somebody who could break your career wide open. It happened for me when I gave that talk at a low cost to Caterpillar. There was one person in that audience who got me into IBM, and that broke open my whole speaking business.

One time, a speaking bureau recommended me to another large company, but they had never heard of me and were unwilling to take the risk. This bureau wanted to know what kind of deal I could offer them, and I said I would speak for them, and if they were unhappy for any reason, there would be no charge.

So I spoke for them, and they were very happy, and I started getting more requests. I was living in Edmonton, Alberta at the time and was continuing to promote my live two-day seminars, which I gave twenty or thirty times a year. In between, I was also being booked for company events, conventions, and associations. The fees varied widely—sometimes \$500, \$1,000, or \$5,000, and sometimes nothing at all. It takes a long time to get to a point where you're consistently paid well.

One of my favorite quotes is from Thomas J. Watson, Jr. when he was asked by a young writer named Arthur Gordon, "How can I be a more successful writer faster?" Mr. Watson told him that the key to becoming more successful faster is for you to double your rate of failure. He said, "Success lies on the other side of failure." What this means in speaking is that you have to double the number of times you speak if you want to be a more successful speaker faster. You have got to look for every single opportunity.

As a young man, one of the rules of speaking I heard is that you're going to have to give 300 free talks before you get a paid talk. What I learned is that you have to develop a talk that is of great interest to your specific audience, and then you must seek out those audiences and aggressively offer your free talk.

Where do you give three hundred talks? Well, there are between two and three million meetings a year in the US alone, and probably another 300,000 more in Canada. These are Rotary meetings, Lion's Club meetings, nonprofit association meetings, automobile club meetings, and every other kind of business organization meeting. And every single one of these groups is looking for a speaker for their next meeting.

Get as much stage time as possible. Your future speaking career will thank you.

Use a Book to Get Gigs

Sometimes a book is a wonderful marketing piece, and writing one can be a powerful way to generate speaking opportunities. People often figure if I've written a book on the subject they're interested in, then I must know it, and they decide to book me to speak.

I wrote a book *How the Best Leaders Lead*, and it has generated nearly a quarter of a million dollars in speaking fees on the subject.

My advice is to pick a subject you think is as hot as a firecracker and write the very best book you can about it. Once it's finished, do everything possible to market it and sell it. And then get onto the next book. Sometimes it is the third, fourth, or fifth book that becomes your hit.

As a friend of mine once said, "A book is merely an extended brochure." What you're doing in the book is giving an overview of what you teach. A book can help position you as an expert, and then they'll hire you.

A book will last forever. If done right, you'll get speaking opportunities for the entire length of your career.

Summary

- Ninety-five percent of the business of speaking is gathering an audience to speak to.
- When convincing an organization to book you to speak, be specific about the benefit to them. For example, don't say sales or profits went up after you spoke to another organization. Instead, say profits went up thirteen percent as a result of your talk.
- It's important to get stage time in your early days, so consider speaking for free or charging a low rate. Getting in front of an audience and impressing them is your best chance to get future bookings from members in that audience.
- Develop a talk that is of great interest to your specific audience, seek out those audiences, and aggressively offer a free talk.
- Consider writing a book as a marketing piece to get speaking opportunities.

CHAPTER

12

PRACTICES AND HABITS OF 6-FIGURE SPEAKERS

What makes a speaker outstanding? What turns someone from an amateur speaker who burns out after a year into a speaker who gets repeat bookings and makes six figures a year?

Here's a list of the habits and practices of excellent speakers. In my experience, these are the traits that all excellent speakers have in common.

If you absorb these traits and implement them in your speaking career, you'll get repeat bookings and will be able to raise your rates to get the income you desire.

Give Them Plenty of Ideas

I remember sitting in a \$500 business seminar and listening to the speakers just blather. I knew some of them and their businesses personally, and I knew that not one of them was going to share anything that any of their competitors could use. Because of that, they spoke in generalities and talked

about their families and how they started off in business and where they went to college.

“This is a complete waste of time. I didn’t learn a darn thing all day long,” I said to one of my managers from a large organization I was running at the time.

So I resolved that, by gum, if ever I spoke, nobody would ever say they just got one or two good ideas out of it. I wanted people to get *one hundred* ideas from my speaking. That became a guide for me.

When you’re given a talk, make it your goal to give them plenty of ideas.

Be the Expert

Here’s a very important point in breaking into professional speaking: if someone asks you to speak on the biology of neuroscience and how serotonin and endorphins affect mood and behavior, you say “No, that’s not my subject.” Never agree to speak on a subject that’s completely out of your experience.

Every subject I ever agreed to speak on was within my experience. When they asked me to speak on leadership, I knew the subject because I had been a leader. I had been a sales manager in large organizations. I had hired, fired, trained and deployed, and worked with people for years. As a matter of fact, my last job before beginning to speak was CEO of a 265-million-dollar development company.

When I was asked to speak on sales and on time management, I had already studied these subjects for years.

When I was still early in my career, I had spent sixty or seventy thousand hours reading, at an average of three hours a day for twenty years. Today I’ve spent 150,000 hours of reading over forty years and more.

Be the expert in your subject. Speak only on subjects you know something about, and don’t accept bookings for subjects you don’t know much about. The money might be good, but your reputation will suffer, harming your future prospects to get booked.

Your Secret Weapon: Speaker Credibility

Your credibility as a speaker will have a tremendous impact on getting engagements. And everything that you do either helps or hurts. That's why we talk about how important it is that you be well prepared and how important it is that your presentation turned out well.

Your level of credibility is how much people believe you. If they believe you, there will be nothing that will cause them to hesitate.

Your job is to convince them that whatever you charge, you are actually free, plus a profit. For every dollar they give you, they're going to get two or three or five or ten dollars back.

The greater your credibility, the lower their fear of making a mistake. The more they like and trust you, the easier it is for them to buy from you—and to buy again.

Your very best source of additional talks and seminars is the people in places where you've already given good talks and seminars. Why? Because once you have given a good talk for a customer or a client, you have super credibility with them. You're a known quantity. They have heard you speak, and they know that you are good.

Don't be afraid to go back to your very best customers and let them know you'd like to work with them again. It's much, much easier to sell a happy client than it is to go out and sell a brand new one.

So credibility is critical. That's why very careful preparation, thinking through your offer, and giving very specific numerical results that people will get if they use your additional services are all so very important. These, plus guaranteeing what you say, all build credibility.

Amateurs focus on getting booked. 6-Figure Speakers focus on building credibility.

Keep Your Content Fresh

Early in my career, I was flying to hear someone speak one evening. I asked the businessperson next to me if he was going to see him also. He said, “No, I’ve already heard him.” I asked him how he meant that, and he said, “I’ve already heard him. He says the same thing every time. I heard him twenty years ago and again two years ago, and he said the same thing both times.”

I resolved not to let that ever happen to me. Nobody would come to my seminar twice and say that they had heard it all before. I continually dedicated myself to renewing and upgrading my content.

You’re sort of like a shopkeeper who puts stuff on the shelves. If nobody buys it, you take it off the shelves and replace it with something that someone will buy.

When I was going through the recession/depression and having a hard time selling my seminars, people told me they wanted talks on sales and on leadership and time management. I told them, “No, personal development is really the foundation of all of those subjects.” They said, “No, no—we want specific sales, leadership, and time management.” I finally said, “Okay. I hear you. I’ll do that seminar.”

At my first sales seminar, I asked what the hardest part of selling was in today’s market. The answer was getting people to make a decision. So my first half-day seminar was *The Art of Closing Sales*. Why? Because I figured out what people wanted more than anything else was to know how to close sales.

Tailor your talk to the current problems facing your market. Keep your content fresh. People will be excited to see you again because they know they’ll learn something new.

Improving Your Speaking Skills

To become a 6-Figure Speaker, you have to continually improve your speaking skills.

After every talk, there are two magic questions you can answer. These questions, by the way, were worth more than a million dollars to me. I call them the million dollar questions. Right after the talk, you sit down with a pad of paper and ask yourself "What did I do right in that talk?" And the second question you ask is "What would I do differently?" If I had that talk to do over again, how would I improve it for next time?

One of the things that many speakers will do is have comment cards. They'll create them on 5 x 8" index cards and hand them out to everybody. The purpose of these is twofold. You say to the client that what you would like everybody to do is to turn in these cards to you so that you can get a really good assessment of the value of your talk—what people liked and didn't like.

On the comment card, you have three questions. But first of all, you ask for a grade, and I always ask for a grade of between one and twenty. If you choose one to ten, they're likely to just pick five or six, and if you say one to five, they'll pick three. So one to twenty is best. Then you can add up all the scores afterward and average them. Anything over sixteen averages out to eighty percent. I say that anything over an average score of eighty is an "A grade," and everything over ninety percent is an "A+." You'll find that if you do a good talk, you'll almost always get an "A" grade.

The first question on the card is "What was the most important thing you learned from this talk?" and also "What was the least important thing?" Question two is "What one action are you going to take immediately?" Question three is "What additional subjects would you like Brian to speak on at subsequent meetings?"

Then listen to your talks and have other people listen to them as well. Look into how you could do it better by reducing "ums" and "ahs" and other little things. You may hear something you said that got a really favorable response. You will pick up a number of things that really worked which you would miss or forget if you didn't listen to the recordings.

I have laugh lines that I've learned and developed over the years that always get a laugh, and I use them in particular places throughout the seminar to get people involved, to make transitions, or to get the audience's attention. Sometimes you won't realize your best stuff until you play back your talks.

The next step is to get a video recording. Get someone to videotape your talk so that you can review and critique it on its visual impressions. If you're really smart, you'll get a coach who will sit and watch with you and tell you all the different things you can do to make it even better. All of these things increase the speed at which you improve.

By the way, when you ask for feedback, and somebody says you should do more of this or less of that, always say thank you. Don't argue, and don't defend. Don't try to blame it on getting there late or on bad lighting. The rule is that you never complain and never explain. Just say thank you, and write it all down. Remember that your only goal is to become better and better.

If you continually improve your skills as a speaker, then there is only one way for your career speaking to go. Upward.

How to Sell Your Products & Services from Speaking

One way to increase your income as a speaker is to sell your products and services on the stage.

I had a very simple formula that I actually backed into. During my seminars, people would ask if I had my program recorded because they would love to be able to listen to it again. And I would say, "No, I don't have it recorded." Finally—ding, ding, ding—a bell went off, and I realized that I needed to record it.

Here's the interesting thing about selling products and services in any format, especially from the stage before, during, or after a talk: *People can only buy when they can mentally see themselves using your services.*

The way you get them to see themselves using your services is to tell stories and create pictures.

One of the very best ways to create a picture is to say to your audience, "Imagine if..."

So, to a sales or entrepreneurial audience, you could say, "Imagine if your sales and profitability were twice as high as they are today. Imagine earning

twice as much as your very best year. What kind of a difference would that make in your life?”

Then you continue, “Here’s a question: Is that possible? Well, the only question you have to ask then is, is there anybody in your industry who is earning twice as much as you? If you’re honest, you’ll admit that there are lots of people who are. Those people are no smarter than you, and they’re not better than you. They’re just doing something differently than you. Whatever they are doing, you can do as well. And I’ll show you how.”

This is how you sell services, by talking about what they desire—increasing their sales, increasing their profitability, or increasing their cash flow.

Another thing I will say during seminars, and even with corporations for that matter, is “I wish I had more time with you. I’m here to talk about the seven critical factors of selling in today’s market, but I have a whole other program on how to sell higher priced products against lower priced competition. Does anybody get objections on the basis of price?” All the hands go up. “What if you could eliminate price as an objection? Once it comes up, you deal with it quickly and efficiently, and it never comes up again. If it never again got in the way of you making a sale, would that help you to increase your sales?”

You’ll be amazed when you seed, and you should always be smiling. When you’re offering additional services, don’t be grim—smile. Put a great big smile on your face.

If you’re speaking to a corporate client, you always want to get permission to sell any future products because they often don’t want you selling anything. However, you can say that you’d like to send everybody in the room a free gift. “I’d like them to come to my website and click on free stuff.” Additional, free content is always appreciated.

For instance, I’ll be talking to an international sales company and ask, “Has anybody here ever had trouble getting everything done in their day?” A lot of hands will go up.

“Well, I’ve developed a system that eliminates procrastination and allows you to get more done in less time. If you want a copy of that, go to my website, and you can find it there for free. It’s really quite amazing.”

Then I continue on with my talk. I'm not trying to sell anything. I'm just giving something away. But what I'm also doing is telling people where they can find me afterward if they want something more.

This is the most important thing of all: give a really good high-content seminar!

What causes people to want to buy your product is useful, high-quality content. You want people to listen to you and say, "Gee, this guy's got a lot of good stuff. I have got to get more." Or "I've got to take a copy with me because there is just too much for me to get in one sitting." So quality and value and high content are the keys. You want people to say, "I want more of that." No matter how good your talk is, you've got to make them hungry for more. Then what you do is satisfy that hunger.

What I did was create the product or service completely in advance. Once I had designed the seminar, I looked at creating it as an audio program. I immediately recorded it so that I had that audio program available, and that was very helpful to me.

Another thing you can sell is additional seminars and workshops. Sometimes if you only have a short time to speak of up to sixty minutes, what you want to do is open your talk by saying how happy you are to be there with them. "In our time together, I'm going to give you some of the very best ideas I've ever discovered on this subject that will help you to achieve more of your goals in this area."

When I do a one-hour seminar, I give seven great ideas and seven key explanations. I give them forty-nine ideas in sixty minutes to help them increase performance, output, and income. Sometimes I'll hand out outlines that give the key points. What this is designed to do is, first of all, give them full value so they say, "Wow! This is great stuff!" Secondly, it's designed to make them hungry for more.

I don't mention any of my products until the mid-morning break or just before lunch. Before that, I give them highly productive ideas full blast for seventy-five to ninety minutes.

Here's an important trick I learned for when people come up to you at your seminar and ask for your business card. I'll say, "I would love to give you my business card, but I'm all out. Please give me your business card, and I'll send you something in the mail." I always have something to send. A PDF, an article, an MP3 download, or a newsletter, but I never give out business cards anymore. For the last twenty-five years, I've just collected other people's cards. Then I can send them information and open the door.

Another thing I do to sell more services is to create a series of attractively packaged CDs. They cost me about \$1.35 each in quantities of 1,000. I'll tell people that I normally charge \$20 or \$25 for these CDs, but I'd like to give a free copy to everybody in the audience.

You can also offer a newsletter. I have six newsletters, and many people who hear me speak subscribe to them. They are short content pieces on the subject of sales, business, personal development, time management, and money. They have a couple of action suggestions at the end, and I encourage everyone I meet to sign up for them.

Whoever the audience is, I'll offer something relevant.

Once you start to build a relationship, then you can start to offer products and services. So about ninety percent of all of my work now comes from my website. Only ten percent comes from speaking bureaus and recommendations and referrals. The website gives me plenty of good exposure.

Another thing you may want to sell is consulting or advisory services. You may want to train yourself as a consultant and work with companies and charge them your daily rate, which may be several thousand dollars a day. I have a good friend who charges \$5,000 an hour as a consultant on the phone.

So how do you get people to want to book you? Again, people don't buy services. They buy what they think or feel they will be *after* they have bought a product or service. In other words, they have to have a clear picture or idea or desire to experience an improved state of being as a result of listening to you.

Start with the outcome or version of themselves that your audience desires and work back to yourself. Ask yourself what your audience really wants, needs, and is willing to pay for, and what you can deliver in such a way that they would be delighted.

Getting Repeat Speaking Engagements

6-Figure Speakers know that the secret to success is this: Getting repeat business.

It takes about one tenth the amount of time and energy to get re-booked with the same satisfied, happy client as it does to go out and find a new client.

Eighty to ninety percent of the earnings of the most successful speakers I know is from repeat business. Some of my best and most successful friends have turned an initial talk into multi-year engagements. What they do is use a series of strategies and techniques to focus on the multi-year engagement process from the very first contact.

Getting multiple engagements depends on four major factors.

The first factor is to **have a core talk that is so powerful that people will want to hear it again.** They will book you to address their audience, and then they will recommend that other people book you.

One of the top speakers in the country was asked on a panel what the key was to getting more bookings. He said that the key to getting more bookings is to do an outstanding job on the booking you have. Speak so well that people want to hear your talk again and again.

One of these people was the head of the Las Vegas Speaker's Association. She gave a talk to one of twenty-four newspapers in a foreign country she was visiting for the first time. The following year, that newspaper had outperformed all the others there because of the leadership work she had done with them in her seminar. The manager of the newspaper was asked why they were making so much more profit in a tough market. He said it was because of the ideas he had applied from this speaker's seminar.

So she was booked by a second, and a third, and a fourth newspaper. She eventually had to move to that country, where she lived and worked for ten years training and retraining all twenty-four companies in that industry. On top of that, she developed new programs and built on her old ones. So one talk, properly delivered to one company in one industry, led to ten years of work.

A speaking bureau told me a speaker they represented put together one good talk for a large company, and they booked him sixty times in one year to give that talk to every single branch and division they had all over the country. This was his “hit” talk, and it made his career.

This doesn’t mean that you only have one topic. It just means you only need one “hit.”

Every single person, as a speaker, has to have a hit talk—a signature talk, one that is so good that people like it and come back to hear it again and again.

The second factor is the client’s company size. How big is the company? If it’s a small company, and they only bring in one or two people to speak each year, the chance of getting multiple engagements is quite low.

What is the structure of the company? Is it local, national, or multidivisional? What are the needs of the company? Surrounding that, you have to look at the economic situation because when the economy is slow, the very first thing to be jettisoned will be the budget for speakers.

We say “fish where the fish are.” Some companies are not really capable of supporting multiple engagements. But assuming that the company is large and has multiple divisions and a lot of people who need to be trained on a variety of subjects—that’s a good client. There is possible gold in the ground there.

The third factor depends on your subject and your range of subjects.

Here’s an important point. When you speak for a company, they hire you because they think that you are a specialist in the area in which you’re speaking. After you have spoken on that subject, there’s a good chance they believe that’s basically all you’ve got to offer.

This brings us to a rule in public relations which says that before you do anything, you have to do something else first. And what you have to do first is you have to prepare well in advance of the talk. You have to sort of set the stage well in advance if you want to achieve multiple engagements.

If you want the customer to book you again, the most valuable thing of all is to start thinking about that before you've even spoken once. One of the qualities of top salespeople is that they think about the second and third sale before they've even made the first sale. So what they are doing is setting the stage. They're biding their time and looking for a subject they can speak on that has great value and will open the eyes of the prospective client to thinking that they have much more to offer.

Finally, you have to over-deliver. Most really good speakers over-deliver. The way that you over-deliver is you over-prepare. You go over and over your material so that the talk is really what they want to hear.

So you never say, "If you really want to get the good stuff, bring me back again." What you say is "I know lots of great stuff, and I'm going to give you some of the best ideas here."

Here's an example of seeding a future engagement. I gave a talk for a company recently, and in the course of it, I digressed from my main subject and said,

"You know, there is an entire strategy of selling higher priced products to lower priced competitors, and I would love to talk to you about that, but it really is a subject for another day. It takes about three hours, after which you will never, ever have to worry about your customer saying they can get it cheaper somewhere else. You will know exactly how to handle the argument and have them eager to pay you more for your product rather than pay less for someone else's. But again, that's a subject we'll deal with at another time."

Some of the audience were already beginning to plan to bring me back for another seminar at their next meeting.

At this point in your speaking engagement, you've given the talk, you've handed out the comment cards, and you've seeded the idea that you can do lots of other things. You've told them you would like to work with them

over the long term. You've told them personally that there are lots of other subjects you can speak on. Here are some additional steps you can take to get repeat business.

Ways to Increase Client Satisfaction & Get Repeat Business

Include an autographed book. Send them a popular or bestselling book that might be really helpful to them personally to help them do their job.

Praise the quality of the audience, compliment them, and then offer to get back in touch. But don't ever ask them to get back to you if they have any more interest in your services because, in terms of control, you must always keep the initiative when you're a speaker.

You have to keep the ball moving forward. I will sometimes wait a month to contact them. One strategy people use is to wait a month and then send a gift with a letter saying, "I was just thinking about you today and remembered how much I enjoyed working with you a month ago. I was reading this over the weekend, and I thought you might enjoy a copy of it."

My rule for letters and books is once every two months. Never send something in the mail with just your business card. Always sign your gift or the card.

Give a discount for recurring talks. Mention that you charge \$XX,000 when you do this particular talk, but of course if you were to work together in the future and you were to do multiple talks, then the cost to them would be much less. You can offer to provide your services to them sort of on a wholesale basis so that it would be much more economically sensible.

Again you have to plant the seeds and tell them that you will charge less if you do *multiple* engagements. I can promise you that the gentleman who got the sixty speaking engagements from one company in one year was negotiated down quite handsomely. If his fee for a talk was \$2,500, they probably paid him \$1,000 to speak times sixty, and he probably took that.

There are companies I speak for where I'll reduce my fees by a third, and the quid pro quo is that they will book me ten or twenty times a year. I do multiple speaking engagements for more than one client, and they book me anywhere from four to ten times a year. Some companies have booked me for as many as twenty a year.

Audio and video recordings. Many speakers will often be asked if they can be recorded. You should always give them the ability record it for internal purposes. When I began speaking, the basic rule when you gave a talk for, say, \$5,000 at an event, and they wanted to record and distribute the audio, was that it would then be \$10,000. If they wanted to video your presentation and send it out to their other offices, then it would be \$15,000. So it was always 2X and 3X for audio and video respectively. That's all gone now. People ask me if they should charge extra, and my answer is that they can try, but they will likely either not book you at all or just not record your talk.

So when people ask me if they can record the event, I say, "Absolutely. But it's really important that you have a high-quality recording for people who couldn't make the meeting." And they are very thankful, especially since they've been diddled around by other speakers who want to charge extra fees.

Send a recent speech. There are two ways to send speeches. You can send them in an email in MP3, or you can send them on CD or DVD. The challenge for me—because I'm old school—is that I'm not that fluent with transferring to hard formats. I do some of this but not a lot. And many of the people you will talk to aren't proficient, either. So what you do is ask them how they would like the material.

Remember that you want to get your stuff out there. I have people who say that I should copyright everything and charge them for the use of my original materials. No, today it's exactly the opposite. It's sort of like when I do radio and television interviews to promote one of my books. I don't charge the station to appear and be interviewed. As a matter of fact, I will crawl over broken glass, use PR specialists, and get up very early in the morning if they will please, please interview me and put me in front of their audience so people can see and hear about my new book, products, services, or my upcoming seminars.

Offer to do multiple talks at not only the first talk but at other talks as well. Offer to do breakouts for managers. Say "By the way, while I'm there, could I do a breakout seminar just for your sales managers or just for your team leaders? I'm doing a two talk for the main group, but I'd be pleased to speak for one hour in a small breakout seminar where you give me a series

of the key issues and questions. I'll make the seminar the answer to these questions from my point of view."

Getting repeat bookings is more art than science, but if you try out a few of these ideas, your chances of getting booked again will go dramatically up.

Please the Meeting Planner

6-Figure Speakers understand that word of mouth is the best way to get future business.

Word of mouth is the single most important method for you get repeat bookings. The meeting planner has to be convinced a speaker will attract a lot of attendees and will please the audience before they hire.

Therefore, your job is to make the meeting planner look good. When the meeting planner hires a good speaker, and the attendees are happy, the meeting planner looks good, is promoted, or is given a bonus.

You can imagine that after that result, the speaker will get recommended to others.

Once I was booked to speak at the annual meeting of a Fortune 1000 company. The president's secretary was a fan of mine and had recommended me to the keynote speaker. The president had never heard of me and was reluctant to bring in someone he didn't know for such an important meeting. However, she was able to convince the president I would be a good choice.

The talk went extremely well, and I received a standing ovation. A few weeks later, I received a letter from the secretary telling me that her boss was so impressed with my talk that she had been promoted and given a \$4000 raise.

Your reputation as a speaker is important, and it spreads quickly. Ensure you keep a good reputation by impressing the meeting planner and the audience.

Please the meeting speaker, and you'll get more referrals than you can handle.

Meet Other Speakers

If your goal is to speak effectively, you have to learn from the top professionals and model yourself after them. Attend every talk and seminar you possibly can. Notice how the speakers interact with the audience both on and off the stage.

Be Clear About Your Objective

You want to achieve complete clarity about why the meeting planner hired you. Your goal is to make the meeting planner look good, and you can only do this if you are clear about what they want you to accomplish.

Remember the objective question, and ask your clients what they would like people to say and do as a result of your talk. Once you're clear on this, organize your talk to achieve that goal.

Some time ago, a meeting planner, the president of a large organization, told me, "Your talk was the best I've heard in eighteen years. You covered every single point we discussed on the telephone, exactly as you promised."

She went on to say that many other speakers promised to customize their talks but never did. Many speakers believe that "it is easier to get a new audience than it is to develop a new talk." These people don't last long in the speaking industry.

Learn the Names of the Key People

Learn the names of the key people in your audience and refer to them in the course of the talk.

Sometimes I put words into the mouths of the key people. I will say something like, "Your president, William Henry, is always emphasizing the importance of quality in everything you do or deliver to your customers."

I'll have either come across this during my research or heard them mention it in their introductory remarks. People are always flattered when you refer to them in a positive way from the stage.

Practicing Gratitude

6-Figure Speakers understand the power of gratitude.

Thank everybody for bringing you in and shake hands with all the key players. Make sure to thank them personally for having you there. I always stay later and take the time to meet, greet, and thank the boss of the person who brought me in, the assistants who helped set up the stage, the sound man, and everybody else who helped. This does get around. People start talking afterward about how you were a really nice person. People say, "We should have that person back again." This is part of seeding as well.

Compliment them on everything they did to make the meeting so successful because it is, in fact, a really complicated process, and they really appreciate it when you acknowledge this. Tell them that the audience was really good, that you feel they got a lot out of your subject, and that a lot of positive change will take place.

Summary

People often ask me what the secret is to becoming a 6-Figure Speaker. The truth is there are several traits that make up a 6-Figure Speaker. But it is a learnable skill. Remember it's all about the audience, give them plenty of ideas, keep your content fresh, and be a credible speaker. Please your client and the meeting speaker, and you'll get repeat bookings, which will, in turn, increase your reputation and get you even more bookings.

The Next Step

You've made it to the end of the 6-Figure Speaker book—congratulations!

You now have some of the best ideas, tips, and strategies to become a top twenty percent speaker. You've learned how to influence and persuade your audience to “march,” and you've also learned the core habits and practices of 6-Figure Speakers.

Now it's your turn.

It's up to you to take action on the ideas presented here. The difference between successful people and unsuccessful people is simple. Successful people take action on the ideas they've learned. Unsuccessful people delay taking action and wait.

Now...if you're curious about the next step and want to learn other ways to become an excellent speaker—whether that is to become a master at preparation, to earn more from your clients, or to compel your audience to take action—be sure to check out the free training that I put together specifically for you. I give away some of the best tactics on how to become a 6-Figure Speaker, tips I don't share with the public.

Here's the link to sign up for free:

<http://www.briantracy.com/speaker-training>

~ Brian Tracy
Keynote Speaker, Consultant, Seminar Leader

THE 6-FIGURE SPEAKER TRAINING PROGRAM

If you are serious about becoming a professional speaker, if you want to easily build your business, and influence, persuade, motivate, inspire, or capture the undying loyalty of your audience, then this program is for you.

The 6-Figure Speaker is an all-encompassing training program for developing and mastering the art of professional speaking. This twelve-part online training program is delivered over two consecutive weeks and covers everything an aspiring speaker needs to know to become a highly paid and in-demand professional speaker.

[Find out more about The 6-Figure Speaker Training Program.](#)

ABOUT BRIAN TRACY

Brian Tracy has consulted for more than 1,000 companies and addressed more than 5,000,000 people in 5,000 talks and seminars throughout the US, Canada and 69 other countries worldwide. He has traveled and worked in over 107 countries on six continents, and speaks four languages.

As a Keynote speaker and seminar leader, he addresses more than 250,000 people each year. He has studied, researched, written and spoken for 30 years in the fields of economics, history, business, philosophy and psychology. He is the top selling author of over 70 books that have been translated into dozens of languages.

He speaks to corporate and public audiences on the subjects of Personal and Professional Development, including the executives and staff of many of America's largest corporations. His exciting talks and seminars on Leadership, Selling, Self-Esteem, Goals, Strategy, Creativity and Success Psychology bring about immediate changes and long-term results.

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As one of the world's premier business consultants and personal success experts, Brian Tracy has devoted his life to helping others achieve things they never dreamed possible. Now, in his latest book, he gives readers the key they need to open any door...and get whatever they want, every time. *The Power of Charm* gives readers proven ways to become more captivating—and persuasive—in any situation.

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income and unlock your true potential, and live a happier and more satisfying life.

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ONE LAST THING

May I ask you for a favor?

If you got anything out of this book—if you took notes, if it shifted your thinking or inspired you at all—I'm hoping you'll do something for me.

Give a copy to somebody else.

Ask them to read it. Let them know what's possible for them if they start to value their dreams and goals over their excuses.

I put this book together to help people like you and them to get their message out into the world.

We need them. We need you. Please spread the word.

Thank you.
~Brian Tracy